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Resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Council on 25 June 2014

[*on a proposal considered in plenary meeting (E/2014/L.18)*]

2014/13. Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

The Economic and Social Council,

Reaffirming General Assembly resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991 and the guiding principles contained in the annex thereto, and recalling other relevant resolutions of the Assembly and relevant resolutions and agreed conclusions of the Economic and Social Council,

Reaffirming also the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence for the provision of humanitarian assistance, and the need for all actors engaged in the provision of humanitarian assistance in situations of complex emergencies and natural disasters to promote and fully respect those principles,

Recalling its decision 2014/211 of 23 April 2014, in which it decided that the theme for the humanitarian affairs segment of its 2014 session would be "The future of humanitarian affairs: towards greater inclusiveness, coordination, interoperability and effectiveness" and that it would convene two panels, on the topics "Effective humanitarian assistance" and "Serving the needs of people in complex emergencies",

Expressing deep concern at the increasing challenges to Member States and to the United Nations humanitarian response capacity posed by the consequences of natural disasters, including those related to the continuing impact of climate change, by the ongoing impact of the financial and economic crisis and by the regional food crises and continuing food insecurity, and the potential of those challenges to increase the need for resources for disaster risk reduction, preparedness and humanitarian assistance, including in developing countries,

Expressing grave concern at the increase in the number of people affected by humanitarian emergencies, including those associated with natural hazards and complex emergencies, at the increased impact of natural disasters and at the frequently protracted displacement resulting from humanitarian emergencies, recognizing the need for burden sharing in this regard, and noting with appreciation

* E/2014/1/Rev.1, annex II.

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efforts at the national and international levels that promote national capacity-building to address complex challenges in this regard,

Condemning the increasing number of attacks and other acts of violence against humanitarian personnel, facilities, assets and supplies, including medical personnel and humanitarian personnel exclusively engaged in medical duties, transports and facilities, and expressing deep concern about the negative implications of such attacks for the provision of humanitarian assistance to affected populations,

Noting with grave concern that violence, including sexual and gender-based violence and violence against children, continues to be deliberately directed against civilian populations in many emergency situations,

Reiterating the need to mainstream a gender perspective into humanitarian assistance in a comprehensive and consistent manner,

Emphasizing that building and strengthening resilience at the local, national, and regional levels is critical to reducing the impact of disasters, including by saving lives, reducing suffering, mitigating damage to property and providing a more predictable and effective delivery of assistance and relief, and in this regard, while recognizing that building resilience is a long-term development process, stressing the need for continued investment in preparedness, prevention, mitigation and response capacity,

Emphasizing also the importance of improving information-sharing among Member States and the United Nations system and, where appropriate, with relevant humanitarian and development organizations, about risks that can lead to humanitarian crises, and of investing in building capacity, in particular for developing countries, to analyse, manage and reduce such risks and vulnerabilities to hazards, as well as, where appropriate, to improve risk analysis and its use in planning,

Recognizing the clear relationship between emergency response, rehabilitation, reconstruction and development, and reaffirming that, in order to ensure a smooth transition from relief to rehabilitation, reconstruction and development, emergency assistance must be provided in ways that will be supportive of recovery and long-term development and that emergency measures should be accompanied by development measures as a step towards the sustainable development of affected States, and in this regard highlighting the importance of closer cooperation between national stakeholders, including the private sector, as appropriate, and humanitarian and development actors,

Noting the contribution, as appropriate, of relevant regional and subregional organizations in the provision of humanitarian assistance within their region, upon the request of the affected State,

Recognizing that volunteerism can make an important contribution to community and nationally led efforts at all stages of humanitarian action,

Noting the importance of identifying best practices and opportunities to enhance the effective interaction and coordination between the United Nations and humanitarian organizations, donors, affected Governments, civil society, the private sector and other relevant actors and to make the best use of their expertise, available capacities, comparative advantages and resources with the overall aim of providing effective humanitarian assistance,

Recognizing the need for the United Nations system and its partners to improve and strengthen the coordination and accountability of humanitarian assistance and leadership within the United Nations humanitarian response system in support of national efforts, and noting the efforts made by the United Nations and its partners, including through the Inter-Agency Standing Committee,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 68/1 of 20 September 2013, in which the Assembly stated that the Council and the Assembly, especially its Second and Third Committees, need to consider and take steps towards the rationalization of their agendas, with a view to eliminating duplication and overlap and promoting complementarity in the consideration and negotiation of similar or related issues,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;[1]

2. *Requests* Member States, relevant organizations and other relevant actors to ensure that all aspects and stages of humanitarian response address the specific needs, challenges and coping capacities of women, girls, men and boys, on an equal basis, taking into consideration age and disability, including through the improved collection, analysis, reporting and use of data disaggregated by sex, age and disability, taking into account, inter alia, the information provided by States, and emphasizes the importance of the full participation of women in decision-making processes related to humanitarian response;

3. *Encourages* Member States, with the support of relevant organizations, as appropriate, to strengthen leadership and commitment to preventing and mitigating humanitarian crises, including through integrating risk management into national development plans, and in this regard encourages humanitarian and development organizations, in cooperation with Governments, to continue to strengthen efforts to address the underlying risks and vulnerabilities, including through considering risk management and resilience strategies;

4. *Stresses* that the United Nations system should continue to enhance existing humanitarian capacities, knowledge and institutions, including, as appropriate, through the transfer of technology and expertise to developing countries, encourages the international community, the relevant entities of the United Nations system and other relevant institutions and organizations to support national authorities in their capacity-building programmes, including through technical cooperation and long-term partnerships, as well as by strengthening their capacity to build resilience, mitigate disaster risks and prepare for and respond to disasters, and also encourages Member States to create and strengthen an enabling environment for the capacity-building of their national and local authorities, national societies of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and national and local non-governmental and community-based organizations in providing timely humanitarian assistance;

5. *Encourages* the United Nations and humanitarian organizations, together with development organizations, to continue to support national leadership in building in-country preparedness capacity, including under the Common Framework for Capacity Development for Emergency Preparedness of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, the United Nations Development Group and the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction;

[1] A/69/80-E/2014/68.

6. *Encourages* Member States, as well as relevant regional and international organizations, in accordance with their specific mandates, to continue to support adaptation to the effects of climate change and to strengthen disaster risk reduction and early warning systems in order to minimize the humanitarian consequences of natural disasters, including those related to the continuing impact of climate change, especially for those countries that are particularly vulnerable;

7. *Urges* States to assess their progress in strengthening preparedness levels for humanitarian response, with a view to increasing efforts to develop, update and strengthen disaster preparedness and risk reduction measures at all levels, in accordance with the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters,[2] in particular priority 5 thereof, taking into account their own circumstances and capacities and in coordination with relevant actors, as appropriate, and encourages the international community and relevant United Nations entities, including the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, United Nations funds and programmes, as well as the specialized agencies, to give increased priority to and mainstream disaster risk reduction, including preparedness, in particular through supporting national and local efforts in that regard;

8. *Encourages* States, the United Nations system and all stakeholders to continue to engage in the consultations on the successor to the Hyogo Framework for Action, culminating at the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, to be held in Sendai, Japan, from 14 to 18 March 2015;

9. *Welcomes* the growing number of initiatives undertaken at the regional and national levels to promote the implementation of the Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance, encourages Member States and, where applicable, regional organizations to take further steps to review and strengthen operational and legal frameworks for international disaster relief, taking into account, as appropriate, the Guidelines, and welcomes the valuable support that national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies are providing to their Governments in this area, in collaboration with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat and other partners;

10. *Encourages* efforts to enhance cooperation and coordination of United Nations humanitarian entities, other relevant humanitarian organizations and donor countries with the affected State, with a view to planning and delivering emergency humanitarian assistance in ways that are supportive of early recovery as well as sustainable rehabilitation, reconstruction and development efforts;

11. *Also encourages* efforts to provide safe and enabling learning environments and quality education in humanitarian emergencies, in particular for the well-being of all girls and boys, to contribute to a smooth transition from relief to development;

12. *Requests* the Emergency Relief Coordinator to continue to lead the efforts to strengthen the coordination and accountability of humanitarian assistance, urges relevant United Nations organizations and other intergovernmental organizations, as well as other humanitarian and relevant development actors,

[2] A/CONF.206/6 and Corr.1, chap. I, resolution 2.

including civil society, to continue to work with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to enhance the coordination, effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian assistance, and encourages Member States to improve their cooperation with the Office;

13. *Also requests* the Emergency Relief Coordinator to continue to improve dialogue with Member States on the relevant processes, activities and deliberations of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee;

14. *Encourages* United Nations humanitarian organizations and other relevant organizations, while strengthening the coordination of humanitarian assistance in the field, to continue to work in close coordination with national Governments, taking into account the primary role of the affected State in the initiation, organization, coordination and implementation of such assistance within its territory;

15. *Requests* the United Nations system and other relevant actors to continue to improve and strengthen humanitarian coordination mechanisms, notably at the field level, including the existing cluster coordination mechanism, and by improving partnership and coordination with national and local authorities, including the use of national/local coordination mechanisms, where possible;

16. *Welcomes* the continued efforts to strengthen the humanitarian response capacity in order to provide a timely, predictable, coordinated and accountable response to humanitarian needs, and requests the Secretary-General to continue efforts in that regard, in consultation with Member States, including by strengthening support to and improving the identification, selection and training of United Nations resident/humanitarian coordinators;

17. *Requests* the United Nations to continue to identify solutions to strengthen its ability to recruit and deploy appropriately senior, skilled and experienced humanitarian staff quickly and flexibly, giving paramount consideration to the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity, while paying due regard to gender equality and to recruiting on as wide a geographical basis as possible, and in this regard encourages the United Nations Development Group to strengthen the resident coordinator system, on which the humanitarian coordinator system is based, in order to ensure full implementation of the management and accountability system of the United Nations development and resident coordinator system;

18. *Also requests* the United Nations to continue to develop specialist technical expertise and capacity to fill gaps in critical humanitarian programming and to procure emergency relief material rapidly and cost-effectively, and locally when appropriate, in order to support Governments and United Nations country teams in the coordination and provision of international humanitarian assistance;

19. *Recognizes* the benefits of the effectiveness of the humanitarian response, including by engaging and coordinating with relevant humanitarian actors, and welcomes in this regard the ongoing efforts by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to build partnerships with regional organizations and the private sector, encourages Member States and the United Nations system to continue to strengthen partnerships at the global, regional, national and local levels in support of national efforts, which can cooperate effectively to provide humanitarian assistance to those in need and ensure that their collaborative efforts adhere to the principles of neutrality, humanity, impartiality and independence, and also encourages the United Nations system to continue to pursue efforts to strengthen

partnerships at the global level with the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, relevant humanitarian non-governmental organizations and other participants in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee;

20. *Notes* the increasing challenges facing both Member States, in particular developing countries, and the international humanitarian response system in responding effectively to all humanitarian emergencies, in particular the underfunded and forgotten emergencies, and in this regard stresses the need to enhance existing partnerships and build new ones, strengthen financing mechanisms, broaden the donor base and engage other partners to ensure adequate resources for the provision of humanitarian assistance;

21. *Expresses concern* at the challenges related to, inter alia, safe access to and use of food and shelter, water and sanitation, health care, fuel, firewood and alternative energy and telecommunications in humanitarian emergencies, and notes with appreciation initiatives at the national and international levels that promote effective cooperation in that regard;

22. *Encourages* Member States, the United Nations system and humanitarian and development organizations, in accordance with their respective mandates, to continue to assess and improve, together with other relevant stakeholders, including the private sector, how innovation can be more systematically promoted through increasing investment in research and development leading to innovation, identified and integrated into humanitarian action in a sustainable manner, and promote the sharing of best practices and lessons learned on innovative tools, processes and evaluations, including those from recent large-scale natural disasters, that could improve the effectiveness and quality of humanitarian response, and in this regard encourages all relevant stakeholders to support the efforts of Member States, in particular developing countries, to strengthen their capacities, including through access to information and communication technologies;

23. *Requests* the United Nations humanitarian organizations, in consultation with Member States, as appropriate, to strengthen the evidence base for humanitarian assistance by further developing common mechanisms to improve the quality, transparency and reliability of and make further progress in respect of strategic planning and common humanitarian needs assessments, to assess their performance in assistance and to ensure the most effective use of humanitarian resources by those organizations;

24. *Encourages* Member States to improve data collection and analysis and to facilitate the exchange of information with humanitarian organizations of the United Nations, in order to support preparedness efforts and to improve the effectiveness of needs-based humanitarian response, and encourages the United Nations system, as appropriate, and other relevant actors to continue to assist developing countries in their efforts to build local and national capacities for data collection and analysis;

25. *Recognizes* that accountability is an integral part of effective humanitarian assistance, and emphasizes the need to enhance the accountability of humanitarian actors at all stages of humanitarian assistance;

26. *Calls upon* the United Nations and its humanitarian partners to enhance accountability to Member States, including affected States, and all other stakeholders, and to further strengthen humanitarian response efforts, including by monitoring and evaluating the provision of their humanitarian assistance,

incorporating lessons learned into programming and consulting with the affected populations so that their needs are appropriately addressed;

27. *Urges* all actors engaged in the provision of humanitarian assistance to fully commit to and duly respect the guiding principles contained in the annex to General Assembly resolution 46/182, including the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality as well as the principle of independence, as recognized by the Assembly in its resolution 58/114 of 17 December 2003;

28. *Calls upon* all States and parties in complex humanitarian emergencies, in particular in armed conflict and in post-conflict situations, in countries in which humanitarian personnel are operating, in conformity with the relevant provisions of international law and national laws, to cooperate fully with the United Nations and other humanitarian agencies and organizations and to ensure the safe and unhindered access of humanitarian personnel and delivery of supplies and equipment in order to allow humanitarian personnel to perform efficiently their task of assisting affected civilian populations, including refugees and internally displaced persons;

29. *Calls upon* all parties to armed conflicts to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law, human rights law and refugee law;

30. *Calls upon* all States and parties to comply fully with the provisions of international humanitarian law, including all the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949,[3] in particular the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, in order to protect and assist civilians in occupied territories, and in this regard urges the international community and the relevant organizations of the United Nations system to strengthen humanitarian assistance to civilians in those situations;

31. *Encourages* Member States, in cooperation with relevant United Nations humanitarian organizations, to ensure that the basic humanitarian needs of affected populations, including food, shelter, health, clean water, education and protection, are addressed as components of humanitarian response, including through providing timely and adequate resources with the aim of ensuring the immediate restoration of safe conditions of life, alleviating the immediate effects of humanitarian emergencies and contributing towards long-term recovery and reconstruction, while ensuring that their collaborative efforts fully adhere to humanitarian principles;

32. *Recognizes* the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement[4] as an important international framework for the protection of internally displaced persons, encourages Member States and humanitarian agencies to continue to work together, in collaboration with host communities, in endeavours to provide a more predictable response to the needs of internally displaced persons, and in this regard calls for continued and enhanced international support, upon request, for the capacity-building efforts of States;

33. *Urges* Member States to continue to take the steps necessary to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian personnel, including medical personnel and humanitarian personnel exclusively engaged in medical duties, premises, facilities, equipment, transports and supplies operating within their borders, and in other territories under their effective control, recognizes the need for appropriate

[3] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, Nos. 970–973.

[4] E/CN.4/1998/53/Add.2, annex.

collaboration between humanitarian actors and relevant authorities of the affected State in matters related to the safety and security of humanitarian personnel, requests the Secretary-General to expedite his efforts to enhance the safety and security of personnel involved in United Nations humanitarian operations, and urges Member States to ensure that perpetrators of crimes committed against humanitarian personnel on their territory or in other territories under their effective control do not operate with impunity and are brought to justice as provided for by national laws and in accordance with obligations under international law;

34. *Also urges* Member States to continue to prevent, investigate and prosecute acts of sexual and gender-based violence in humanitarian emergencies, calls upon Member States and relevant organizations to strengthen support services for victims of such violence, and also calls for a more effective response in that regard;

35. *Encourages* the United Nations and other relevant humanitarian actors to include as part of their risk management strategy the building of good relations and trust with national and local governments and to promote acceptance by local communities, and all relevant actors, in order to enable humanitarian assistance to be provided in accordance with humanitarian principles;

36. *Emphasizes* the fundamentally civilian character of humanitarian assistance, and, in situations in which military capacity and assets are used to support the implementation of humanitarian assistance, reaffirms the need for their use to be undertaken with the consent of the affected State and in conformity with international law, including international humanitarian law, as well as humanitarian principles;

37. *Encourages* Member States, the private sector, civil society and other relevant entities to make new contributions and to consider increasing and diversifying their existing contributions to humanitarian funding mechanisms, including consolidated and flash appeals, the Central Emergency Response Fund and other funds such as the country-based pooled funds, based on and in proportion to assessed needs, as a means of ensuring flexible, predictable, timely, needs-based and, where possible, multi-year, non-earmarked and additional resources to meet global humanitarian challenges, encourages donors to adhere to the Principles and Good Practice of Humanitarian Donorship, [5] reiterates that contributions for humanitarian assistance should be provided in a way which is not to the detriment of resources made available for international cooperation for development, recognizes the need for more diversified funding bases, and encourages the United Nations and humanitarian organizations to consider making further use of multi-year consolidated appeals, as appropriate;

38. *Recognizes* that building preparedness is a long-term investment that will contribute to the achievement of humanitarian and development objectives, including a reduction in the need for humanitarian response, and therefore further encourages Member States, the United Nations system and other relevant actors to provide effective, predictable, flexible and adequate funding for preparedness and disaster risk reduction activities, including from humanitarian and development budgets, and stresses that international preparedness efforts reinforce and support national and local response capacities and institutions;

[5] A/58/99-E/2003/94, annex II.

39. *Welcomes* the initiative of the Secretary-General to hold the first World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul, Turkey, in 2016, aimed at sharing knowledge and best practices in the humanitarian field to improve the coordination, capacity and effectiveness of humanitarian response, and requests the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to ensure an inclusive, consultative and transparent preparatory process;

40. *Requests* the Secretary-General to reflect the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the present resolution in his next report to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly on the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations.

29th plenary meeting
25 June 2014